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EXAMINER

IRSHADULLAH, M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

DATE MAILED: 05/31/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/725,933	KIM ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	M. Irshadullah	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to correspondence filed November 03, 2004.

Summary Of Instant Office Action

2. Applicant's arguments regarding claims 1-43 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103, Office Action mailed June 03, 2004 have been fully considered and are responded below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 8-13, 24-32, 35-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Srinivasan (US Patent 5,548,506) in view of Tatham et al (US Patent 6,223,177 B1).

Srinivasan teaches:

Claim 1. A workflow management system for automating a business process (Abstract, lines 1-4, wherein "designing and implementation of Auto Multi-project Server System" providing "automation of tasks of project management coordination for work-group team members" clearly infers that the reference system provides "a process of performing and controlling (managing the flow or workflow of) tasks" to be performed by

the team members (work-group) of an organization, and wherein "organizational" infers that reference is concerned with a process relating to a business organization as indicated by Fig. 3 {A: Resource name (include units)> Feet of copper pipes, Resource budget (numbers only)>2000 and Resource consumed>500, B: Resource name(include units)>Plumber man hours, Resource budget (numbers only)>10 and Resource consumed> etc., wherein citation of feet copper pipes, budget and resource consumed etc. pointing to that the project and steps thereof or workflow relating to a business dealing with installation of pipes. Moreover, it is noted that Srinivasan project system being generic, is for use by any entity including business), comprising:

a) a host computer that controls the system (Abstract, lines 5-6 and col. 2, lines 59-61, wherein cited "AMPS running on a host computer and performing reference invention's functions, procedures, processes" indicating reference's teaching "a host computer running and performing or controlling system functions or the system");

c) a process designer that creates and models flows and properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Col. 7, lines 32-34, Fig. 2 {50} described col. 5, lines 53-54 recited with and Fig. 3, col. 5, lines 23-39, wherein a user would use "module 50" for creating "project plan comprising information on the project, tasks, dependencies and resources, col.7, lines 32-34", thus functioning as "a process designer" and "designing, Abstract, line 1", "compiling multi-project plans, Abstract, lines 10-11" as well as "project or team leader's creating project plan" inferring "modeling" and Fig. 3 depicts the claimed "project plans' or models flows and properties");

d) a database that compiles information on the administrative steps and the

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properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {10}, col. 5, lines 23-25, Fig. 2 (60), col. 5, lines 62-63, and a user use cited databases to “store or compile” the application comprising steps to be used by the administrator (See discussion about administrator in Applicant’s claim 1b) below), also, a user would use said databases to store or compile above discussed “business process and properties”);

e) a process engine that executes and handles the business process based on the information on the administrative steps and the flows and the properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 2 {20 working in co-operation with 10, 30, 40, 60, 70, 80, 100 and 110} described col. 5, line 53 through col. 6, line 18. Here, cited “auto project management server software, col. 4, lines 29-32 and Fig. 4, described col. 7, line 35 through col. 8, line 5, functioning as “a process engine” as further supported by process steps or flowchart of Fig. 4, and see discussion about “administrator” in Applicant’s claim 1b) below, and discussion about “business process” above); and

g) an application program that can be used for at least one of creating and executing the business process (Srinivasan: Col. 1, lines 33-35 read with col. 5, lines 8-15 and col. 7, line 1. Cited “software or application program” being used for above discussed business process employing cited “creating, col. 7, line 1” function).

In the following element:

b) an administrator that prepares for automating the business process;

Srinivasan teaches:

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preparing the business process for automating (Col. 7, lines 13-25 and col. 1, lines 33-50, wherein cited "setting up the environment by creating an environment configuration file comprising command string entry to be used for submitting input file for email, reading email, indicating weekends, setting frequency of and issuing reminders etc." indicating reference's teaching "setting up or preparing environment" and "command strings" to be used for performing cited functions, representing "procedures or processes" as further supported by: "Auto Multi-Project Server causing a change in an organization's automated planning, tracking, managing team work projects processes, col. 7, lines 6-10". Moreover, cited "organization and team work projects {multiple organizational work-teams, col. 1, line 42}" indicating that above discussed procedures or processes are related to "organization(s) or institutions including "business" entities. Further elaboration of the organizational or business procedure or processes is provided by cited col. 1, lines 33-50. Furthermore, Srinivasan teaches a variety of system users, such as program or general manager, project & task leaders etc., col. 3, lines 21-22, col. 6, line 64 through col. 7, line 3 and col. 7, line 28");

Srinivasan does not specifically teach:

an administrator.

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Fig. 3e, col. 7, lines 53-54, wherein citation of "administrator accessing all aspects of the system via administration screen" indicating reference's teaching "an administrator"). While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based

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system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of Applicant's invention to incorporate Tatham et al's feature into Srinivasan's invention, thereby entailing a system for project management of multiple work groups and providing flexible control to the users (See Srinivasan col. 1, lines 40-42 and Tatham et al's col. 3, lines 50-60).

In the element below:

f) a web client.

Srinivasan does not teach claimed feature.

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Col. 3, lines 39-42). As discussed above, while Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of instant invention to incorporate Tatham et al's feature into Srinivasan's invention, thereby providing a system enabling the users employing the latest available technology and resultant enhanced functionality and extended utility (See Tatham et al's col. 3, lines 39-46).

In the following claim:

Claim 8. The workflow management system of claim 1, wherein the web client further comprises:

- a) a worklist handler;
- b) a workitem handler; and
- c) a process monitor.

Srinivasan does not teach:

- a) a worklist handler;
- b) a workitem handler; and
- c) a process monitor.

However, Tatham et al teach the same a worklist handler, workitem handler (Fig. 2A {170: workgroup creation template} and "monitoring workgroup size, database size, server traffic etc., col. 5, lines 50-54", wherein user would use reference's "template" as "worklist and workitem handlers" and cited "monitoring" indicating reference's teaching a function to "monitor" workgroup size, database size, server traffic etc., procedures or processes). As discussed above, while Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system including "templates" enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of instant invention to incorporate Tatham et al's feature into Srinivasan's invention,

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thereby providing a system enabling the users employing the latest available technology and resultant enhanced functionality and extended utility (See Tatham et al's col. 3, lines 39-46).

Claim 9. The workflow management system of claim 8, wherein the worklist handler maintains a work list for a user (inherent, since it is the basic function of above discussed worklist handler).

Claim 10. The workflow management system of claim 9, wherein the workitem handler supports execution of the business process (Inherent, since it is the requisite functionality of above discussed workitem handler).

Claim 11. The workflow management system of claim 10, wherein the process monitor checks a status of the business process (As discussed in Applicant's claim 8 above, reference teaches "monitoring" function for monitoring or checking the condition or status of above discussed procedures or processes or business processes relating to workgroup size, database size, server traffic, hit count etc., and further support is provided by: "system continuously updating databases on status changes reported by workgroup members, col. 1, lines 34-36", i.e., system is performing checking or monitoring the status of changes and as a result updating the databases).

Claim 12. The workflow management system of claim 11, wherein the process monitor further checks a history of the business process and current progress of the business process (See discussion about "monitoring in Applicant's claim 8 and a user would employ reference's "monitoring" function or process for monitoring or checking "decision history or history, col. 7, lines 7-8" and "continuous reporting on status changes or current progress, col. 1, lines 34-36").

Claim 13. The workflow management system of claim 12, wherein the process monitor further monitors resource utilization (See discussion about "monitoring in Applicant's claim 8 and a user would employ reference's "monitoring" function or process for claimed purpose).

Claim 24. The workflow management system of claim 1, wherein the process engine comprises:

a) an interface agent that can interchange with other process engines information on status of the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {User A, User B, User C} and abstract, lines 7-9, wherein cited "users A, B, C" representing claimed "interface agents", the agents communing or interchanging data or information with other components of the system in Fig. 1 including above discussed process engine and the data or information including condition or status {status report and status changes, Abstract, lines 16-19, Srinivasan} of the above discussed business process);

b) a request manager that receives requests from a user, directs the process engine to handle the requests, and returns results to the user (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {Users A, B, C communicating with 20 via 30}, wherein reference's "messaging" function infers availability of a program to facilitate users' requesting {request manager} the system for project data or information and other claimed purposes);

c) a dispatcher that retrieves and executes the requests and stores results in the database (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {Users A, B, C communicating with 20 via 30} and bi-directional arrows clearly indicate availability of program {dispatcher} facilitating "deriving or retrieval" and "implementation or execution" of above discussed users' request);

d) a scheduler (Tatham et al: Col. 7, lines 14-18 and see motivation in 1f) above);

e) a security manager that controls a certification process with an outside certification server (Srinivasan: Col. 3, lines 33-38, wherein citation of "security issues" infer system's capability of providing claims security manager); and

f) a database broker that interfaces with the process engine and the database (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {20 interacting or interfacing with 10 via 40}, col. 4, lines 26-33 and 36-38, wherein "network operating system" infers a program or module {broker} being used for facilitating communication between cited 20 and 10).

Claim 25. The workflow management system of claim 24, wherein the process engine allocates at least one activity to at least one participant and the

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Activities (Srinivasan: See discussion regarding “process engine” in Applicant’s claim 1e) and col. 5, lines 23-50, wherein “project leader, col. 5, line 27” is a “participant” and “start date, description of task, duration or completion date relating to project, col. 5, lines 25-31” are activities and a user would use the process engine employing reference’s “allocation, col. 5, line 44 read with line 49” function for claimed purpose), comprise states of:

initial; waiting; dead; running; suspended; complete; terminated; error; and overdue (Inherent, since claimed functional elements are an essential requisite of a software program {process engine}).

Claim 26. The workflow management system of claim 24, wherein the scheduler manages a deadline of the activity and a wait activity (See discussion about “scheduler” in Applicant’s claim 24d) above and user would use the scheduler for claimed limitations).

Claim 27. The workflow management system of claim 24, wherein the security manager further encodes and decodes information (Srinivasan: Col. 3, lines 33-38, wherein user would use reference’s “security” function for claimed purpose).

Claim 28. The workflow management system of claim 25, wherein the activities transit among the states according to a business rule (Inherent, since all tasks

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or activities have to follow some conditions {business rules} and would change position {states} as they would be acted upon by the system).

Claim 29. The workflow management system of claim 25, wherein the process engine controls the workflow using a transition count in order to keep a consistency of the business process transit (See discussion of Applicant's claim 1e) above and a user would use reference's AMPS, Fig. 1 {20} including above discussed performance engine for claimed purpose in accordance with above discussed business rules).

Claim 30. The workflow management system of claim 29, wherein the process engine sets to zero the transition counts of all the transitions that can be processed in a forward direction from the at least one activity, when the activity is started (As discussed above, a user would use Srinivasan's AMPS comprising above discussed process engine to perform claimed limitation).

Claim 31. The workflow management system of claim 30, wherein the process engine further sets to one the transition counts of the transitions stemming from the activity, when the activity is completed (As discussed above, user would use Srinivasan's AMPS comprising above discussed process engine for claimed purpose).

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Claim 32. A method for automating a business process, comprising steps of:

a) modeling the business process, the step of modeling including generating an organization chart (See discussion about “modeling” in Applicant’s claim 1c) above and Srinivasan: Col. 1, lines 61-62, wherein user would employ cited “charting” function for creating or generating above discussed organization’s structure in some format including chart);

b) designing the business process (See discussion of Applicant’s claim 1c) above);

c) compiling the business process in a database (See discussion of Applicant’s claim 1d) above); and

d) executing the business process (See discussion of Applicant’s claim 1e) above); and

In the following element:

e) monitoring the business process.

Srinivasan does not explicitly teach above limitation.

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Col. 5, lines 50-58, wherein cited “monitoring workgroup size, database size, server traffic, hit counts etc., indicating reference’s teaching “monitoring” cited activities, and the activities relating to business, as indicated by “business activity” in “security is an important feature for most business activities and reference system providing levels of security, col. 5, lines 55-58)”. While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information,

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applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of Applicant's invention to include Tatham et al's feature into Srinivasan's invention, thereby achieving a system enabling the users to keep abreast with project activities (See Srinivasan's col. 3, lines 6-8).

Claim 35. The method claim 32, wherein the step of designing a process further comprises:

a) identifying an activity to be executed (Srinivasan: Claim 1b), wherein a user would use cited "identifying" function for claimed limitation); and

b) allocating a property to the activity (See discussion about "allocation" function in applicant's claim 25) above and a user would employ the allocation function for claimed limitation).

Claim 36. The method of claim 35, wherein the activity comprises:

a start activity that starts a process; a normal activity that involves an intervention by a participant; a wait activity; a mail activity; an SQL activity that accesses an application database; a sub-process activity that comprises a plurality of separate activities; an agent activity that automatically activates a program; a connector activity;

and an end activity that represents an end of the process (Inherent, since claimed functions or elements are an essential requisite of a program or process or activity).

Claim 37. The method of claim 35, wherein the property comprises:

a) a participant that describes an individual that executes the activity (Srinivasan: Col. 6, line 67, wherein user would use “assigning” function for claimed purpose);

b) an application (Srinivasan: Col. 1, lines 33-39, wherein “invention describing design and application of network based project management system” indicating reference’s provisioning “applications” relating to compilation, tracking and managing projects);

c) a post-condition that determines when the activity is completed (Inherent, since in programming some final logical or conditional function {post-condition} have to be programmed for ascertaining {determining} as to when a process {activity} would end {completed});

d) a schedule that describes planning of the activity (Srinivasan: col. 7, lines 32-33, wherein cited “creating a project plan” indicating reference’s teaching a “plan” and the plan including project goals, schedules, dependencies etc., col. 1, 51-54);

e) a deadline (Srinivasan: Col. 3, lines 23-24, wherein cited “task deadlines” indicating reference’s teach “a deadline”);

f) a sub-process that describes a location and an option of the sub-process’ activity (Inherent, since a software program inherently comprises steps {processes} and each process {step} comprises a sub-step or sub-process) and the same details or

describes the requisite information including claimed option, location);

g) a parameter that defines a value necessary for executing a program in the agent activity (Srinivasan: Col. 3, lines 18-25, wherein "priorities", infer some kind of parameter used for claimed purpose);

h) a mail-to that determines the recipient of e-mail in the mail activity (Inherent, since it is requisite information in a mail or email procedure or application);

i) a mail content that represent the contents of e-mail in the mail activity (Inherent, since it is requisite information in a mail or email procedure or application);

j) a general information that shows the names and the descriptions of the activity (Srinivasan: Claim 2 read and col. 3, lines 1-5 with col. 7, lines 24-25);

k) a transition condition that represents conditions for an input transition and an output transition (Inherent; since, it is the basic function of any logical function or condition); and

l) an icon (Tatham et al: Fig. 1 {Site #1 through 7 being symbolic representation of sites for users 30, 40 etc.}, are indeed "icons" and see motivation in claim 1b) above).

Claim 38. The method of claim 35, wherein the participant can comprise one of or any combination of a user, a department and the role (Srinivasan: Abstract, lines 1-3, col. 4, lines 42-44, wherein "organization" infers comprising constituent entities including department, division, section etc., and "work group" indicates "users" and "program managers, team leaders" etc. infer claimed "role").

Claim 39. The method of claim 38, wherein the participant can be a manager of the participant (Srinivasan: Col. 3, lines 21-22, wherein "general or program manager" infer claimed "authority or manager").

Claim 40. The method of claim 38, wherein the participant can be a peer of the participant (Srinivasan: Col. 7, line 2, wherein "task leaders" representing claimed entity {peer of participant}).

Claim 41. The method of claim 38, wherein the participant can be a department of the participant (Srinivasan: Abstract, line 3, wherein "organization" infers provision of some "entity or entities such as claimed department").

Claim 42. The method of claim 38, wherein activity is allocated based on the workload of the participant (Inherent, since tasks or activities are assigned in accordance with working capabilities {workload} of workers {participants}).

Claim 43. The method of claim 32, wherein generating an organization chart comprises mapping departments, member names, member titles and member roles (Inherent, since mapping is an essential step in database environment and a user would use the same for providing coordination or association or mapping {Srinivasan: col. 5, lines 40-50} Srinivasan's "organization" inferring "department", "task leader's name" indicating "member names" "titles" and "roles", col. 1, lines 38-39, col. 5, lines 23-30").

5. Claims 2-7 and 14-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Srinivasan (US Patent 5,548,506) in view of Tatham et al (US Patent 6,223,177 B1) and further in view of Workgroup automation tools for end users (Software Review) (Office IQ), hereinafter "Workgroup".

Claim 2. The workflow management system of claim 1, wherein the administrator further comprises:

b) a role/group manager that can create, delete and maintain a role and a user group (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {60}, col. 6, line 64 through col. 7, line 3, wherein cited "program manager, project leader, tasks leaders" infer availability of claimed "role/group manager" and see discussion about create, delete etc. above);

c) an authority manager (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {60} and col. 3, lines 21-22 and col. 7, line 28, wherein "general or group or systems" manager points to claimed "authority manager" that can create, delete and maintain authorities to access the business process and the application program and can allocate the authorities to the role, the group and a member of at least one of the department and the user group (Col. 7, lines 22-25 and col. 1, lines 40-42, wherein user would use reference's "authorization" function would be used for claimed purpose and "organization", "work teams" indicating "department", "user group" and "project leader" pointing to "member" of said department or organization and his "role").

In the undernoted element:

a) an organization manager that can create, delete and maintain a department;

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Srinivasan teaches:

an organization manager (Fig. 1 {60}, col. 4, line 43 recited with col. 3, lines 21-22, wherein program (general) manager functioning as "organization manager" and "an organization, col. 1, line 38, encompassing various entities, such as "department" "controlled or maintained" by said general (program) manager; yet

Srinivasan does not show the features below:

create, delete

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Col. 2, line 3 and col. 5, lines 39-40 and a user would use cited functions for claimed purpose). While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users and Workgroup is a tool for automating workflow management system allowing coordination of collaborative projects and other activities to workgroups.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of current invention to incorporate Tatham et al's feature into Srinivasan's invention, thereby providing a system enabling the users to employ enhanced functionality and extended utility: editing, amending and the like (See Tatham et al's col. 5, lines 44-48).

In the following element:

d) a folder manager that can create, delete and maintain a folder.

Both Srinivasan and Tatham et al do not teach the above feature.

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However, Workgroup teaches the same (Page 1, lines 5 and 24-26 read with page 2, lines 53-54, wherein citation of “documents, folders” infer availability of a “program” to manage {creating, deleting etc.} various documents, folders etc. {folder manager}).

While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users and Workgroup is a tool for automating workflow management system allowing coordination of collaborative projects and other activities to workgroups. The are in the field of work management of organizational team of users. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of current invention to incorporate Workgroup's feature into the combination of Srinivasan and Tatham et al's invention, thereby providing a system enabling the users employ extended functionality and enhanced utility relative to handling requisite documents by the users (See Workgroup, page 2, lines 37-43).

Claim 3. The workflow management system of claim 2, further comprising an object manager, wherein the object manager interfaces the administrator with the database (Workgroup: Page 2, lines 12-13, wherein “storage in object-oriented” format infers the availability of claimed “object manager” and since system provides “sharing information”, “coordinating activities etc.” and “networks”, a user would use the same to provide claimed interface. See motivation in Applicant's claim 2a) above).

Claim 4. The workflow management system of claim 3, wherein the database further comprises:

a) an organization database (Srinivasan: Fig. 2 {60} and a user would use reference's "project database" for claimed purpose);

b) authority database (Srinivasan: Fig. 2 {60} a user would use cited database 60 for storing information about group managers, team leaders etc., functioning as authority(ies) as indicated by: "program manager assigning inter-project priorities, project leader creating first plan, task leaders updating project databases etc., col. 6, line 64 through col. 7, line 3") and

c) a folder database (User would use Srinivasan's database, Fig 2 {60} as claimed one).

Claim 5. The workflow management system of claim 1, wherein the process designer comprises:

a) a graphic designer that can create and design an activity and a business process using a graphic interface (Workgroup: Page 2, lines 1-11 and see motivation in Applicant's claim 2a) above); and

b) a property designer that can define an activity to be executed in the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 3, col. 5, lines 23-39, wherein Fig. 3 entries clearly infer availability of a program that facilitate claimed defining, execution etc., and see motivation in Applicant's 2a) above).

Claim 6. The workflow management system of claim 5, wherein the processor designer further comprises an object manager that interfaces the processor designer with the database (Inherent, since Srinivasan's various system components communicate with each other, user would use said communication interface for claimed purpose).

Claim 7. The workflow management system of claim 6, wherein the 43 database comprises:

a) a process definition folder that contains information related to the business process modeling (Inherent, since provision of a function for defining a process is a fundamental requisite of any program or system and said function is stored in a storage means {database} in some form or format including a file or folder etc.);

b) a data folder that contains data generated by the business process execution (Inherent, since provision of some partition in a database for storing data in some format (file or folder) is an essential requisite in database building); and

c) an organization folder (As discussed above).

Claim 14. The workflow management system of claim 2, wherein the organization manager further creates, deletes and maintains relationships between the departments, ranks of the members in the department and/or user group and information regarding the members in the department and/or user group (See discussion of Applicant's claim 2a) above and Srinivasan's col. 7, lines 50-51 and col. 6,

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lines 64-67, wherein user would use reference's "ranking" function for ranking "project work team or members of user work group).

In the following claim:

Claim 15. The workflow management system of claim 14, wherein the organization manager further registers a signature of each member of the department and/or the user group.

Srinivasan teaches:

Organization manager, members of department or user group and registration (Col. 3, lines 21-22 and col. 1, lines 36-42, wherein "program or general manager-col. 3, lines 21-22" is "organization manager", cited "organization-col. 1, line 38" inferring "department" and "organizational work teams-col. 1, line 42" indicating "members of department or user groups" and "assigning unique identifier to projects-col. 3, lines 36-38" inferring "registering identities").

Both Srinivasan and Tatham et al do not teach:

signature.

However, signature taking or registering is a well known practice in any organization or department, because some kind of identity, security or authoritative insignia is an essential requisite in the organization or department, and the feature would have been employed both by Srinivasan and Tatham et al, since they deal with work management of organizational team of users.

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of instant invention to incorporate above mentioned feature into the combination of Srinivasan and Tatham et al's invention, because it would enable identifying specific users and ensure security of their work.

Claim 16. The workflow management system of claim 2, wherein the 15 role/group manager can allocate the member to the role and the user group (See discussion of Applicant's claim 2b) above and Srinivasan's col. 6, line 67 and col. 4, lines 15-16, wherein a user would use reference's "assigning" function for claimed limitation).

Claim 17. The workflow management system of claim 2, wherein the authority manager can allocate the authorities to the role, the group and the member of the department and/or user group (See discussion of Applicant's claims 2c and 16 above).

Claim 18. The workflow management system of claim 5, wherein the property designer can allocate the activity to a participant (See discussion of Applicant's claims 5b and 16 above).

Claim 19. The workflow management system of claim 5, wherein the property designer can set up a business rule (See discussion of Applicant's claims 5b and Srinivasan's col. 3, lines 21-25).

Claim 20. The workflow management system of claim 19, wherein the business rule includes terms, conditions and a transition path after completing the activity (Srinivasan: Col. 5, lines 21-25, wherein "priorities" for completion", "task deadlines" and "resource usage" infer claimed "terms, conditions etc.").

Claim 21. The workflow management system of claim 5, wherein the process designer further comprises a check-out table (See discussion of Applicant's claim 1c) and Srinivasan's Fig. 3, col. 5, lines 24-25, wherein user would use Fig. 3 file as claimed table).

Claim 22. The workflow management system of claim 21, wherein the check-out table contains information on a process model currently checked-out by a user (Srinivasan: Fig. 3, col. 5, lines 24-25, wherein Fig. 3 file would comprise the claimed feature).

Claim 23. The workflow management system of claim 22, wherein the system keep a currently checked-out process from being checked-out again by referring to the check-out table (As discussed above, user would employ Fig. 3 file as claimed "checkout table" which would be used for claimed limitation).

Claim 33. The method of claim 32, wherein the step of modeling the business process further comprises:

- a) mapping at least one of departments, members, member titles and member roles to generate the organization chart (Inherent, since mapping is an essential step in database environment and a user would use the same for coordinating or associating or mapping {col. 5, lines 40-50} Srinivasan's "organization" inferring "department", "task leader's name" indicating "member names" "titles" and "roles", col. 1, lines 38-39 and col. 5, lines 23-30");
- b) creating a role (See discussion of claim 2b) above); and
- c) allocating an authority to the role (See discussion of claim 2c) above).

Claim 34. The method of claim 32, wherein the step of modeling the business process further comprises:

- a) mapping at least one of departments, members, member titles and member roles to generate the organization chart (Inherent, since mapping is an essential step in database environment and a user would use the same for "coordinating or associating or mapping, col. 5, lines 40-50" Srinivasan's "organization" inferring "department", "project and task leader's names" indicating "member names, titles and roles, col. 1, lines 38-39 and col. 5, lines 23-30");
- b) creating a group of human resources (See discussion of Applicant's claim 33b) above); and

c) allocating an authority to the group of human resources (See discussion of Applicant's claim 33c) above).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed November 03, 2004 have been fully considered and are responded below.

Applicant argues that:

A) "Teaching, motivation or suggestion to combine should not be from the knowledge provided by the Application under examination".

In regard to this, it is respectfully stated that recitations from the Applicant's specification were not for the reason of combining the prior art employed as misconstrued by the Applicant, it was only to show that Applicant's claim limitation(s) has/have been interpreted in light of the description provided in the specification, and it was done in view of the following Case Law:

Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

B) "There is no teaching, motivation or suggestion in the art to combine the two references".

In respect to this, it is observed that Srinivasan, for instance, teaches claim 1 limitations as follows:

a) a host computer that controls the system (Abstract, lines 5-6 and col. 2, lines 59-61);

c) a process designer that creates and models flows and properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Col. 7, lines 32-34, Fig. 2 {50} described col. 5, lines 53-54 recited with and Fig. 3, col. 5, lines 23-39, wherein a user would use “module 50” for creating “project plan comprising information on the project, tasks, dependencies and resources (col.7, lines 32-34)”, thus functioning as “a process designer” and “designing (Abstract, line 1)”, “compiling multi-project plans (Abstract, lines 10-11)” as well as “project or team leader’s creating project plan” infer “modeling” and Fig. 3 depicts the claimed project plans’ “flow and properties” (See Applicant’s Spec., page 6, lines 10-13 and page 21, line 11 through page 23, line 12);

d) a database that compiles information on the administrative steps and the properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 1 {10}, col. 5, lines 23-25, Fig. 2 (60), col. 5, lines 62-63. Applicant will appreciate that cited databases would be used to store (compile) the application comprising steps to be used by the administrator (See discussion about administrator in 1b) below), also, user would use said databases to store (compile) above discussed “business process and properties”);

e) a process engine that executes and handles the business process based on the information on the administrative steps and the flows and the properties of the business process (Srinivasan: Fig. 2 {20 working in co-operation with 10, 30, 40, 60, 70, 80, 100 and 110} described col. 5, line 53 through col. 6, line 18. Here, cited “auto project management server software (col. 4, lines 29-32 and Fig. 4, described col. 7,

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line 35 through col. 8, line 5) functions as “a process engine” as further supported by process steps or flowchart of Fig. 4, and see discussion about “administrator” below, and discussion about “business process” above); and

g) an application program that can be used for at least one of creating and executing the business process (Srinivasan: Col. 1, lines 33-35 read with col. 5, lines 8-15 and col. 7, line 1. Cited “software or application program” being used for above discussed business process employing cited “creating, col. 7, line 1” function).

Srinivasan does not teach some features in element b) and does teach the feature in element f), however, as shown below, Tatham et al teach the same and a reasonably appropriate motivation statements have been provided in 1b) and 1f) above:

In the following element:

b) an administrator that prepares for automating the business process;

Srinivasan teaches:

preparing the business process for automating (Col. 7, lines 13-25 and col. 1, lines 33-50, wherein cited “setting up the environment by creating an environment configuration file comprising command string entry to be used for submitting input file for email, reading email, indicating weekends, setting frequency of and issuing reminders etc.” indicating reference’s teaching “setting up or preparing environment” and “command strings” to be used for performing cited functions, representing “procedures or processes” as further supported by: “Auto Multi-Project Server causing a change in an organization’s automated planning, tracking, managing team work projects

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processes, col. 7, lines 6-10". Moreover, cited "organization and team work projects {multiple organizational work-teams, col. 1, line 42}" indicating that above discussed procedures or processes are related to "organization(s) or institutions including "business" entities. Further elaboration of the organizational or business procedure or processes is provided by cited col. 1, lines 33-50. Furthermore, Srinivasan teaches a variety of system users, such as program or general manager, project & task leaders etc., col. 3, lines 21-22, col. 6, line 64 through col. 7, line 3 and col. 7, line 28");

Srinivasan does not specifically teach:

an administrator.

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Fig. 3e, col. 7, lines 53-54, wherein citation of "administrator accessing all aspects of the system via administration screen" indicating reference's teaching "an administrator"). While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management of organizational team of users.

In the element below:

f) a web client.

Srinivasan does not teach claimed feature.

However, Tatham et al teach the same (Col. 3, lines 39-42). As discussed above, while Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members

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thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management of organizational team of users.

Furthermore, Applicant will appreciably realize that in the instant Office Action a more appropriate elaboration of the citations and reasonably more elucidate statements of motivation have been provided.

C) Tatham et al's "administrator" is not the administrator that prepares for automating the business process.

In response to this, Applicant is referred to the following Case Law:

One cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Furthermore, Applicant is referred to the discussion of the element 1b) above.

D) Tatham et al do not teach: "monitoring the business process".

Relative to this, Applicant is directed to above mentioned Case Law.

Moreover, the combination of Srinivasan and Tatham et al teach the feature in question as under:

In the following element of claim 32:

e) monitoring the business process.

Srinivasan does not explicitly teach above limitation.

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However, Tatham et al teach the same (Col. 5, lines 50-58, wherein cited "monitoring workgroup size, database size, server traffic, hit counts etc., indicating reference's teaching "monitoring" cited activities, and the activities relating to business, as indicated by "business activity" in "security is an important feature for most business activities and reference system providing levels of security, col. 5, lines 55-58)". While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users. While Srinivasan relates to a system which automates flow and control of procedures, information, applications etc. relating to a project for an organization and members thereof, Tatham et al provide a web-based system enabling collaborative functionality among a number or group of users. They both are in the field of work management for an organizational team of users and a reasonably appropriate motivation statement has been provided in Applicant's claim 32e) above.

E) Workgroup does not teach: "an administrator that prepares for automating the business process".

In this respect, Applicant is directed to above mentioned Case Law and discussion above.

F) "Workgroup is not an enabling reference".

In response to it, it is stated that Applicant being a highly knowledgeable in the computer and relative arts, ought to have realized that the Workgroup is a review'

however, the description provided therein is sufficient for a person having ordinary skill in computer and programming etc., arts for its implementation or enablement.

In the light of above discussed facts, it is stated that Applicant's arguments have been fully considered, deemed unpersuasive and prior rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Irshadullah whose telephone number is 571-272-6731. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

M. Irshadullah
May 17, 2005



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